The effort to forge a civil rights mission on the Supreme Court involved many individuals and years of work. While hardly comparable, the same was true in the research and writing of this book. Early on, Shep Melnick, Sid Milkis, and H. W. Perry, Jr. provided invaluable guidance about how to shape the project and helped me refine the skills necessary to pull it off. Beginning in my graduate school days, and continuing until today, numerous friends have spent many hours discussing my arguments, reading my work, or just providing support. They include: Brad Clarke, Pearson Cross, Rick Dewine, Mike Hausenfleck, Amy Higer, Elena Kolesnikova, Millette Shamir, and Mauri Ziff. Chris Kirkey deserves a special note of gratitude in this regard.

Bob Duffy and K. C. Johnson read substantial parts of the manuscript and provided critical advice on how to sharpen its focus. Others who read and commented on portions of the manuscript assisted me in significantly improving its quality. They include: Howard Ball, Amy Bridges, Mark Graber, Jim Hurtgen, Ken Kersch, Bill Leuchtenburg, Carolyn Long, George Lovell, Mark Peterson, Dick Pious, Suzanne Samuels, Stephen Skowronek, and Keith Whittington. The anonymous reviewers made excellent comments and were especially helpful in working out the kinks of the manuscript. Charlie Derber, Howard Gillman, and John K. White offered encouragement and important advice at various points along the way.

Karen Orren was exceedingly generous in helping me to prepare my article “Constitutional Vision and Supreme Court Decisions: Reconsidering Roosevelt on Race” for publication in Studies in American Political Development. Much of that article appears in the pages of this book. Don Beachler read and reread most of the manuscript. Beyond providing invaluable feedback about the work, he has become a close friend with whom I often discuss ideas and thoughts about politics and the law. I owe a special thanks to Mike Paris for his continuing support of this project since its inception. I met Mike in graduate school at Brandeis University, and ever since he has
read and commented on much of what I have written, always with his mix-
ture of compassion and constructive criticism.

My colleagues at SUNY, Fredonia, have been very supportive and have
provided me with a nourishing environment for finishing the research and
writing of this book. A grant from the Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Insti-
tute facilitated my weeks with the primary documents at the FDR Library.
A grant and invitation to attend the Supreme Court Historical Society’s 2001
Summer Seminar allowed me to complete my research at the Library of
Congress and the U.S. National Archives and to share my work with other
scholars in my field of interest. In the course of researching and writing this
book, I have benefited greatly from the resources of many libraries and ar-
chives. I thank their staff members for the aid they provided me. Stephanie
Frederico also assisted me during one summer under the Dana Intern Pro-
gram at Ithaca College, helping me track down some of the more obscure
sources I rely on in making my arguments.

I am indebted to my editor, John Tryneski, who took a chance on a first-
time author he knew little about. His colleagues Anne Ford, Rodney Pow-
vell, and Leslie Keros were also very helpful in preparing the book for publi-
cation. Copyeditor Clair James and Joanne Foeller, who assisted with the
index, deserve praise for their fine work.

My mom and dad, children of the New Deal, have of course been with
me throughout the years it took me to finish this book. I thank them for their
love and patience. I also owe thanks to my late grandparents and to the rest
of my family for the care and warmth they have provided and continue to
provide me.

And in the end, my wife, Stephanie, deserves a special place in this book.
I met Steph in the midst of my writing, but without her love and encour-
agement I would have never completed the project.